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Third Sunday in Lent - March 23, 2025

706 Come unto Me, Ye Weary

CW 706

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Confession

CW 154

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

1

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



A - men.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

First Reading

Exodus 3:1-15

¹Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ³So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

⁴When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

⁵"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁶Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. ⁸So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites,

Hivites and Jebusites. ⁹And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

¹¹But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

¹²And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

¹³Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

¹⁴God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

¹⁵God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.'

"This is my name forever,
the name you shall call me
from generation to generation.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

85A LORD, in Your Mercy, Hear My Prayer

Psalm 85A

Refrain



Tone



You, LORD, forgave the iniquity of your / people
and covered / all their sins.
You set aside / all your wrath
and turned from your fierce / anger.
Show us your unfailing / love, LORD,
and grant us your sal- / vation. *Refrain*

I will listen to what God the / LORD says;
he promises peace to his / people.
Surely his salvation is near those who / fear him,
that his glory may dwell / in our land.
Love and faithfulness meet to- / gether;
righteousness and peace kiss each / other.
Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

Text: Hal H. Hopson

Tune: Hal H. Hopson

Setting: Kermit G. Moldenhauer

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Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:1–13

¹For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. ²They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. ³They all ate the same spiritual food ⁴and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. ⁷Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.” ⁸We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. ⁹We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. ¹⁰And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

¹¹These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. ¹²So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall! ¹³No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

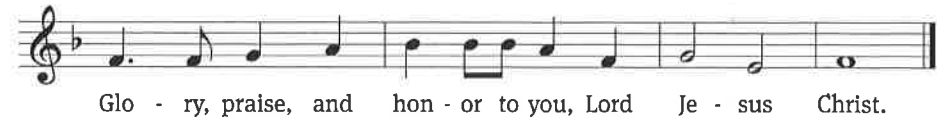
The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

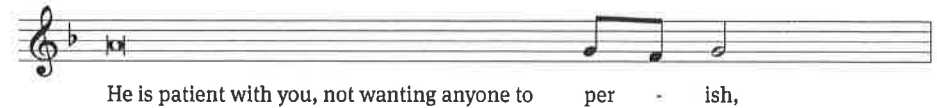
2 Peter 3:9



Refrain



Tone



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Gospel

Luke 13:1–9

¹Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ²Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? ³I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. ⁴Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

⁶Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. ⁷So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

⁸“‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!

650 From Depths of Woe, Lord God, I Cry

CW 650

**Sermon: Exodus 3:1-15 Do You See God's Guiding Hand
in Your Life?**

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

8

Prayer of the Church

Almighty God and Father, we thank you for all your mercies, especially for the gift of your Son, through whom you have revealed your gracious will. We praise you for the Holy Spirit and his working through the means of grace.

Plant your Word in our hearts, and cause it to produce fruit in our lives.

Strengthen and defend your Church, that by your Word and sacraments faith may grow and love toward all may increase.
Support all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world.

Keep our children in the grace of their baptisms. Enable their parents to train them in lives of faith.

Raise up Christians to serve you in the ministry of the Word and in all godly walks of life.

Preserve our nation in justice and honor. Guide and bless all who make, administer, and judge our laws.

Give them wisdom that they may promote justice and hinder evil.

Let your blessing rest on planting and harvest, commerce and industry, medicine and science, the arts and culture. Protect all who travel, and care for those whose work is difficult or dangerous.

Be with all who devote themselves to any useful task.

Comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity. Remember those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those for whom death draws near.

Grant them your love, and take them into your tender care.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

9

We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you, who now rest from their labors. Console those who are mourning or living with sadness.

Keep us in the true faith, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven.

Grant us these things, Father, for the sake of Jesus, who died and rose again.

Amen.

712 Delay Not! Delay Not

CW 712

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. **Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

1B How Truly Blest Are They

Psalm 1B



1 How tru - ly blest are they who shun the
2 But make the law of God their stud - y
3 They like a tree shall thrive with wa - ters
4 The wick - ed are not so! They no such



sin - ners' ways, a - mong their coun - sels
and de - light a - mid the la - bors
near the root. Fresh as the leaf their
bless - ing find. Their hopes shall flee like



nev - er stand, nor take the scorn - ers' place,
of the day and watch - es of the night.
name shall live; their works are heav'n - ly fruit.
emp - ty chaff be - fore the driv - ing wind.

5 How will they bear to stand
before that judgment seat
where all the saints at Christ's right hand
in full assembly meet?

6 God knows and he approves
the way the righteous go,
but sinners and their works shall meet
a dreadful overthrow.

Together

NEWS. RESOURCES. ENCOURAGEMENT.



A Lutheran church body in Tanzania is recommended for fellowship with WELS

The WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) has the responsibility of overseeing our synod's relationships with other Lutheran church bodies in the United States and around the world. The vast majority of the commission's time is spent strengthening the bonds of fellowship with our sister church bodies. But the commission also monitors what is going on in other Lutheran church bodies with which we are not in fellowship.

The CICR also communicates with Lutheran church bodies that are seeking fellowship with WELS. In recent years, discussions with such churches have led our synod to declare fellowship with Lutheran churches in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda.

This beautiful trend continues as the worldwide fellowship expands. After several years of detailed doctrinal discussions between WELS representatives and the Africa Mission Evangelism Church of Tanzania, the CICR is recommending that our synod publicly and officially declare fellowship with the Africa Mission Evangelism Church at this summer's synod convention. Such celebrations of newly established fellowship are always one of the highlights of a synod convention.

The Africa Mission Evangelism Church is a growing Lutheran church body that separated from its previous affiliation because of doctrinal reasons. It consists of 12,000 members in 78 congregations and is served by approximately 65 pastors. The head of the Africa Mission Evangelism Church is Bishop Baltazar Kaaya. Bishop Kaaya will be attending our convention this summer to tell us more about our new partner in Africa.

We thank God that he continues to build his church.

Serving with you in Christ,
WELS President Mark Schroeder 

God's plan flourishes in Vietnam

It has been 14 years since Hmong church leaders in Vietnam invited WELS to train their pastors in the truth of the gospel. It has been seven years since the communist government in Vietnam invited WELS to build a theological education center in the capital city of Hanoi. From the very beginning, we knew that the Lord had opened a door to reach the more than two million Hmong people who live in Vietnam and the surrounding countries. We also knew that this door could close at any time. Our WELS World Missions team worked quickly to ensure WELS took full advantage of the time the Lord had provided. And God's work moved forward in ways we could have never predicted.

With the generosity of faithful donors, we built a sturdy building—complete with classrooms, sleeping quarters, and a kitchen—meant to house 60 students at a time and train pastors for Christ's service. Almost two years ago at the dedication, it stood ready, a beacon of hope. But government regulations have kept us from using it for now. The paperwork continues, and the delay has a story of its own. A local church body that once supported us began demanding practices contrary to Scripture—insisting we stop baptizing babies and allow non-Lutheran teachers to train our pastors. In a Martin Luther-esque stand, our partner church broke away, choosing faithfulness over compromise. Since then, they've lost government recognition, which has slowed the

process for gaining occupancy of the theological education center. Yet we trust that access could come any day, because God's timing is not ours.

Some might see this as a delay, a plan stalled. But God has provided paths we never expected. Since we began, our sister church has grown to over 160,000 souls, hungry for the Word. Fifty-five pastors have been trained—not in that building but in rented spaces and internet classrooms where God gathered them to learn. Another 120 seminary-level students are studying now, their hearts set on preaching the gospel. Catechism classes, led by trained leaders, echo through every congregation in the rural training program that was developed by WELS missionaries and is now being supported by 12 fully trained Hmong pastors. This flock proudly calls themselves Lutheran, not because of a building but because of the truth they've learned through WELS training.

Take a pastoral student and his brother, for example. When they feared funding had faltered, they sold their family's water buffalo—a sacrifice that cut deep in their rural life—so one could join the biblical training they feared might pass them by. Today, that student is a pastor, shepherding souls, his brother's faith beside him. What earthly hurdles could stop God's Spirit at work?

These twists and turns and extra red tape have given us more time—time to train, time to grow, and time to stand firm without interference.

RECOVERY IN CHRIST offers hope in Jesus.

A symptom of addiction of any kind is hopelessness. The focus of Recovery in Christ is to bring the hope of Jesus. RIC meets most Sundays at 4:00 pm at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Onalaska, Wisconsin (school library) and Wednesdays, 1:15 pm at La Crosse's Coulee Recovery Center, 933 Ferry Street. To confirm meeting days/times call 608-567-3038 for Sundays, 608-784-4177 for Wednesdays.

Recovery in Christ is not meant to replace other groups or therapists. It is an additional group that offers Christian fellowship and direction to those in recovery from alcohol and/or drugs.

NEED A CARD? Why go to a big box store and spend more than you have to? Please browse our wide selection of cards in the former library room at Christ. Cards are exceptionally priced at \$0.50 each.

Diane Schultz is our sunshine lady. If anyone knows of someone who would like a card of encouragement, please let her know. Her cellphone is 608-738-9934 and her home phone is 608-685-3861.

Church Offerings

Wednesday, March 12: 32

General: \$555 Missions: \$100 Cap Imp.: \$

Sunday, March 16: 36

General: \$1235 Missions: \$40 Cap Imp: \$50
(Cap Imp included a gift for Luther High School)

Total: \$1980

General: \$1790 Missions: \$140 Cap Imp.: \$50

Our Weekly Walk with Jesus

Sunday, March 23

8:30 am Sunday School/Confirmation Class

9:30 am Worship Service

10:30 am Coffee hour

Monday, March 24

Tuesday, March 25

(no Bible classes today)

Wednesday, March 26

5:00 pm Lenten Supper

6:30 pm Lenten Service

Thursday, March 27

Friday, March 28

Saturday, March 29

Sunday, March 30

8:30 am Sunday School/Confirmation Class

9:30 am Worship Service

10:30 am Coffee hour